

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BERLIN 5385

E.O.11652: GDS

TAG: PFOR, PINT, GE, GW, UR

SUBJECT: THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S ARMY
IN THE GDR

REF: BERLIN 5431

1. SUMMARY: THE GDR OBSERVED THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS
NATIONAL PEOPLE'S ARMY (NVA) MARCH 1 WITH MILITARY DISPLAYS
IN EAST BERLIN AND OFFICIAL CEREMONIES ATTENDED BY A HIGH-
LEVEL SOVIET MILITARY DELEGATION HEADED BY MARSHAL VASILII
CHUIKOV. IN MARKING THE OCCASION, BOTH SED FIRST SECRE-
TARY ERICH HONECKER AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE HEINZ HOFFMAN
UNDERSCORED THE NVA'S ALLIANCE TO THE SED AND ITS FIRM
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ALLIANCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION. THE HIGHLY PUBLICIZED
NVA ANNIVERSARY REPRESENTS A HIGHLIGHT IN THE INCREASED
EMPHASIS ON MILITARY SECURITY THROUGHOUT GDR SOCIETY IN
RECENT MONTHS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE GDR MARKED THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS NATIONAL PEOPLES ARMY (NVA) MARCH 1 WITH POMP AND CEREMONY IN EAST BERLIN, AND STATEMENTS BY SED FIRST SECRETARY ERICH HONECKER AND MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE GENERAL HEINZ HOFFMANN CALLED FOR INCREASED MILITARY PREPAREDNESS IN THE GDR. ON UNTER DEN LINDEN, BETWEEN THE MONUMENT TO THE VICTIMS OF FASCISM AND MILITARISM AND THE STATUE OF PRUSSIAN GENERAL ERHARD SCHARNHORST (THE PREFERRED SITE FOR GDR MILITARY DISPLAYS IN EAST BERLIN, AN NVA HONOR GUARD STAGES A PARADE AT MIDDAY ON MARCH 1 AND A MILITARY TATTOO IN THE EVENING. ON THE SAME DAY, GERALD HOFFMANN GAVE A RECEPTION ATTENDED BY THOSE MEMBERS OF THE POLITBURO NOT IN MOSCOW FOR THE 25TH CPSU CONGRESS AND BY A SOVIET MILITARY DELEGATION HEADED BY MARSHAL VASILII CHUIKOV, WHO ARRIVED IN EAST BERLIN FEBRUARY 27 TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS. IN HIS REMARKS AT THE MARCH 1 CEREMONY, CHUIKOV UNDERSCORED THE CLOSE TIES BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE GDR ON THE BASIS OF THE OCTOBER 1975 TREATY AND MENTIONED THE UNCHANGING NATURE OF IMPERIALISM AND THE THREAT FROM PEKING.

3. IN THE SED CENTRAL COMMITTEE MESSAGE WHICH APPEARED ON PAGE 1 OF NEUES DEUTSCHLAND, SED FIRST SECRETARY HONECKER STRESSED THE LEADING ROLE OF THE PARTY IN THE NVA AND THE IMPORTANCE OF A FIRST MILITARY ALLIANCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION. THE MESSAGE NOTED THAT SOCIALISM WAS "ON THE OFFENSIVE" IN THE WORLD AND THAT AGGRESSIVE CIRCLES IN THE WEST HAD INCREASED THEIR ANTI-DETENTE ACTIVITIES. SINCE "SUDDEN TURNS" IN THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION COULD ARISE, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GDR MILITARY INCREASED AS DID ITS COMMITMENT TO PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM, SOCIALIST PATRIOTISM AND THE SOVIET UNION. THE HONECKER MESSAGE CLOSED BY CALLING FOR A HEIGHTENED INFLUENCE OF THE PARTY AND PARTY ORGANIZATIONS ON THE NVA, WHICH ALREADY STANDS DIRECTLY UNDER HONECKER'S COMMAND IN HIS CAPACITY AS HEAD

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OF THE GDR NATIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL.

4. THE PRINCIPAL ADDRESS IN HONOR OF THE NVA WAS DELIVERED BY GERALD HOFFMANN DURING A FEBRUARY 27 CEREMONY IN THE CAVERNOUS FRIEDRICHSTADT-PALAST ATTENDED BY THOSE POLITBURO MEMBERS STILL IN BERLIN AND THE CHUIKOV DELEGATION. HOFFMANN MADE A POINT OF BEGINNING HIS SPEECH WITH A REFERENCE TO VENUE: THE GROUP HAD ASSEMBLED TO OBSERVE THIS ANNIVERSARY OF THE GDR MILITARY "IN THE CENTER OF BERLIN, THE CAPITAL OF THE GDR". HE OF COURSE DID NOT ALLUDE DIRECTLY TO THE ALLIED POSITION ON THE DEMILITARIZED STATUS OF BERLIN, BUT HIS POINT WAS CLEARLY MADE. HOFFMANN WENT ON TO CHARACTERIZE THE NVA

AS AN ARMY DEEPLYROOTED IN THE WORKING CLASS, DIRECTLY UNDER THE COMMAND OF THE SED, AND DETERMINED BY ITS CLOSE MILITARY TIES WITH THE SOVIET UNION. HE DECLARED THAT THE NVA CONSTITUTED A UNITY OF THE PEOPLE AND THE MILITARY IN THE GDR, "RESPECTED BY FRIENDS AND HATED BY THE ENEMY", AND HE PRESENTED STATISTICS TO SHOW THAT ITS OFFICER CORPS CAME LARGELY FROM THE WORKING CLASS. FOR HOFFMANN, THE NVA WAS CREATION OF THE SED ALONE, WHICH TAUGHT THE PEOPLE OF THE GDR "TO LOVE OUR FRIENDS AND HATE THE ENEMY". HOWEVER, THE GDR MILITARY HAD ALSO LEARNED MUCH FROM THE SOVIET ARMY WHICH HOFFMANN DESCRIBED AS HAVING "PATIENTLY" LENT KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE TO ITS FLEDGLING EAST GERMAN COUNTERPART. THENVA HAD FURTHER LEARNED FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY GERMAN WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT, FROM LENIN, AND FROM TESTS OF STRENGTH SUCH AS AUGUST 1961, (COMMENT: THE MONTH THE BERLIN WALL WAS CONSTRUCTED).

5. NOTING THAT THE DRAFT SED PARTY PROGRAM, WHICH WILL BE ADOPTED AT THE NINTH PARTY CONGRESS IN MAY, HAD CALLED FOR A STRENGTHENED NATIONAL DEFENSE, HOFFMANN URGED INCREASED EFFECTIVENESS IN THE NVA AND STATED THAT MILITARY PREPAREDNESS HAD NO LIMITS IN THE GDR. IN SO FAR AS THESE EIGHT PARTY CONGRESSES IN 1971 HAD RESULTED IN IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE NVA AS IN GDR SOCIETY AT LARGE, HOFFMANN ARGUED, THENVA HAD BEEN ABLE TO INCREASE ITS READINESS AND BETTER MASTER THE WEAPONRY OF MODERN WARFARE. NOT ONLY SHOULD THIS READINESS BE CONFIDENTIAL

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INCREASED WITHIN THENVA, BUT ALL GDR CITIZENS SHOULD BE PREPARED TO DEFEND SOCIALISM. HOFFMANN PROMISED THAT THE SED NINTH PARTY CONGRESS WOULD POINT THE WAY TO THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THENVA.

6. DISCUSSING THE NVA'S ROLE IN THE WARSAW PACT, HOFFMANN CONJURED UP ENOUGH IMAGES FROM RECENT PAST TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE REAL FUNCTION OF THE NVA, WAS IN FACT TO PROTECT EASTERN EUROPE FROM THE GERMANS, AND THE FRG. BECAUSE OF THENVA, HOFFMANN ARGUED "THE SOVIET SOLDIER, THE POLISH FARMER, AND THE CZECH WORKER(SIC)" KNEW FOR THE FIRST TIME IN CENTURIES THAT A GERMAN STATE (THE GDR) AND ARMY (THE NVA) EXISTED THAT DID NOT THREATEN THEIR EXISTENCE BUT RATHER FORMED A SECURE PROTECTIVE BARRIER AGAINST THE NEW "CRUSADERS OF PRUSSIAN-GERMAN MILITARISM" WHEREAS THE NVA WAS A DEFENSIVE ARMY AND THREATENED NO ONE, HE SAID, REACTIONARY CIRCLES IN NATO AND THE FRG POSED A REAL THREAT. HOFFMAN REFERRED TO THOSE IN THE WEST WHO SOUGHT TO INCORPORATE THE GDR AND CONNECT ITS TERRITORY INTO A "SPRINGBOARD FOR THE DOMINANCE OF FRG MONOPOLIES OVER EUROPE" AND SAW THIS AS THE REASON WHY THE WEST DEFAMED THE NVA AND ITS

ALLIANCE WITH THE SOVIET ARMY. HOWEVER, GDR SOLDIERS
ARMED WITH SOVIET WEAPONS AND ACTING IN THE TRADITION
OF LIEBKNECHT AND THAELMANN, HAD ERECTED INSUPERABLE
BARRIERS AGAINST ITS "DRANG NACH OSTEN". HERE HOFFMANN
WAXED ELOQUENT WITHIN THE EXCEEDING NARROW CONFINES
OF PARTE DEUTSCH "A GOOD AND STABLE WALL WAS BUILT
BEHIND WHICH ONE CAN LEAD A HAPPY AND SECURE LIFE WITH
GATES FIRMLY CLOSED TO ALL INTRUDERS AND OPEN WIDE ONLY
TO THOSE WHO COME TO US WITH A PEACEFUL HEART."

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BERLIN 5385

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAG: PFOR, PINT, GE, GW, UR

SUBJECT: THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S ARMY IN THE GDR

7. HOFFMANN WENT ON TO STATE THAT ALTHOUGH DETENTE WAS
THE PRINCIPAL TENDENCY OF THE ERA, THE THREAT FROM THE
WEST PERSISTED. CITING STATEMENTS BY US DEFMIN RUMSFELD,
AND COMMENTS FROM 1955 BY FORMER FRG CHANCELLOR ADENAUER,
HOFFMANN SAID THE ENEMY STOOD READY TO USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS
IN EUROPE. HE WAS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF FRG DEFMIN
GEORG LEBER AND THE RECENT ISSUED "WHITE BOOK" OF FRG
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, AND PORTRAYED THE FRG BUNDESWEHR

AS SEEKING A RAPID INCREASE IN ITS MILITARY STRENGTH SO AS
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TO TURN THE MILITARY BALANCE OF POWER IN CENTRAL EUROPE
TO ITS FAVOR. HAVING THUS BUILT UP THE THREAT FROM THE
WEST, HOFFMAN CALLED FOR INCREASED MILITARY PREPARED-
NESS AGAINST AN IMPERIALIST ENEMY THAT STILL SOUGHT TO
DESTROY SOCIALISM. HE FURTHER CALLED FOR SOLIDARITY IN
SUPPORT OF SOCIALISM AROUND THE WORLD AND AGAINST ALL
THREATS TO THE INDEPENDENCE OF YOUNG NATIONS STATES SUCH
AS CHILE, ANGOLA AND VIETNAM.

8. COMMENT: THE PRESENCE OF A HIGH-LEVEL SOVIET
MILITARY DELEGATION AT THE NVA CEREMONIES IN EAST BERLIN
IS A SIGN OF THE IMPORTANCE THE SOVIET UNION ATTACHES TO
THE 200,000 MAN (INCLUDING BORDER TROOPS) EAST GERMAN
ARMY. THEAT THE DELEGATION SHOULD BE HEADED BY MARSHAL
CHUIKOV, A LEADER OF SOVIET FORCES AT STALINGRAD AND IN
THE BATTLE FOR BERLIN, IS BUT ONE MORE EXAMPLE OF THE
SYMBOLIC ROLE ASSIGNED TO THE 400,000 MAN SOVIET ARMY
IN THE GDR AS "LIBERATORS" WHO MADE SOCIALISM IN EAST
GERMANY POSSIBLE.

9. GDR MEDIA HAVE BEEN AWASH WITH MILITARY PROGAGANDA
DURING THE CURRENT NVA ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, WHICH
CAN BE SEEN AS THE HIGH POINT OF AN INCREASING EMPHASIS
OF DEFENSE AND SECURITY EVIDENT IN THE GDR SINCE SPRING,
1975. IN ADDITION TO A FLURRY OF MAGAZINE COVERS AND
PRESS ARTICLE DEVOTED TO THE NVA, GDR RADIO AND TELE-
VISION HAVE RECENTLY BEEN USED INCREASINGLY AS VEHICLES
FOR PROMOTING THE MILITARY. IT IS NOT UNCOMMON TO HEAR
CHILDREN'S GROUPS INTONING NVA SONGS ON GDR RADIO, AND
THE MARCH 1 TEN MINUTE INSTALLMENT OF THE MOST WIDELY
VIEWED GDR CHILDREN'S TELEVISION PROGRAM WAS DEVOTED
ENTIRELY TO PRASING THE MILITARY. THESE PROGAGANDA
EFFORTS CONSISTENTLY PORTRAY THE NVA AS AN ARMY OF THE
PEOPLE THAT EXISTS TO PROTECT A SECURE LIFE IN THE GDR
AND DESTROY THE ENEMY, IF NECESSARY. THEY FURTHER STRESS
THE DUTY OF ALL CITIZENS IN PARAMILITARY DEFENSE.

10. THE CURRENT PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN
IS THE CULMINATION OF A TREND THAT CAN BE DATED BACK TO
APRIL, 1975, WHEN THE GDR MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
ORGAN "MILITAERWESEN" ANNOUNCED THAT PUBLICITY FOR THE
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NVA WOULD BE INCREASED. WITH THE LAVISH CELEBRATION
OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION FROM FASCISM
IN MAY AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, FOLLOWING THE HELSINKI
CONFERENCE IN AUGUST, THE EMPHASIS ON THE MILITARY AND

SECURITY IN THE GDR INCREASED STEADILY. HONECKER'S STRIDENT SEPTEMBER 11 SPEECH BEFORE GDR AIR DEFENSE UNITS PUT THE OFFICIAL STAMP OF APPROVAL ON THIS NEW MILITARY EMPHASIS.

1. THE CURRENT SECURITY CAMPAIGN IN THE GDR EXTENDS TO ALL LEVELS OF SOCIETY AND IS DOMINATED BY A STEPPED UP RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN FOR THE NVA, EMPHASIS ON THE PARAMILITARY DUTIES OF THE AVERAGE CITIZEN, AND AN ATTEMPT TO INCUCLATE A GREATER RESPECT FOR THE MILITARY AMONG GDR YOUTH. THE MAY, 1975 ISSUE OF GDR EDUCATIONAL MAGAZINE, "PAEDOGOGIK", FOR EXAMPLE, CALLED UPON GDR SCHOOLS TO DO MORE TO PREPARE YOUTH FOR THE MILITARY, WHILE THE NOVEMBER ISSUE OF FDJ ORGAN "JUNGE WELT" URGED THAT YOUNG GIRLS BE MORE ACTIVELY INTEGRATED INTO PARAMILITARY ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH SO AS TO ASSURE THAT THEY ACQUIRED A "FUNDAMENTALLY AFFIRMATIVE ATTITUDE" TOWARD THE MILITARY. THE BREADTH OF PARAMILITARY ACTIVITIES APPEARS TO BE INCREASING, AS INDICATED BY REPORTS FROM HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY IN EAST BERLIN TO THE EFFECT THAT PROFESSORS ARE BEING CALLED UPON TO PARTICIPATE IN PARAMILITARY PROGRAMS MORE ACTIVELY THAN IN THE PAST, LEADING TO A MORE FREQUENT CANCELLATION OF LECTURES AND SEMINARS. A "TACTICAL MILITARY EXERCISE" OF THE GDR'S PRINCIPAL PARAMILITARY GROUPS, THE "COMBAT GROUPS OF THE WORKING CLASS", HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR EARLY 1976 AND WILL INCLUDE LARGE NUMBERS OF THE 400,000 MEMBERS OF THESE GROUPS ORGANIZED AROUND PLANTS AND FACTORIES THROUGHOUT THE GDR. IN A JANUARY 1976 INTERVIEW WITH "PIONEERLEITER", A MAGAZINE FOR YOUTH GROUP LEADERS, GDR MAJOR GENERAL HORST BRUENNER ANNOUNCED THAT A SERIES OF MILITARY MANEUVERS GAMES FOR CHILDREN HAD BEEN SCHEDULED FOR WINTER 1976 TO BRING MEMBERS OF THE GDR CHILDREN'S ORGANIZATION "JUNGE PIONIERS" INTO CONTACT WITH THE MILITARY. IN BRUENNER'S WORDS, THE PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE WAS TO INSTILL IN EAST GERMAN CHILDREN "LOVE AND RESPECT FOR SOCIALIST SOLDIERS AND LOATHING FOR OUR ENEMIES".
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12. OTHER RECENT EXAMPLES OF THIS TREND IN THE GDR INCLUDE AN INCREASINGLY POSITIVE OFFICIAL INTERPRETATION OF THE PRUSSIAN MILITARY TRADITION, THE INTRODUCTION IN OCTOBER OF A NEW AWARD FOR GDR MILITARY AND SECURITY FORCES, AND THE ADOPTION OF A NEW LAW IN NOVEMBER TO ASSURE BETTER PROVISIONING FOR THE NVA. ON NOVEMBER 12, 1975, THE GDR PLAYED UP THE 220TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF PRUSSIAN GENERAL GERHARD SCHARNHORST WITH A PARADE AND WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY AT HIS STATUE ON UNTER DEN LINDEN. ON THIS OCCASION, SCHARNHORST WAS HONORED FOR HAVING INTRODUCED THE CONCEPT OF A PEOPLE'S ARMY TO GERMANY AND FOR HAVING ALLIED WITH THE RUSSIANS IN A WAR OF LIBERATION. IN OCTOBER, 1975 HONECKER ANNOUNCED

THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW AWARD, "HERO OF THE GDR", INTENDED FOR MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY AND SECURITY FORCES OF THE GDR FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL DEFENSE. THE FIRST WINER, ANNOUNCED ON NOVEMBER 18 ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 65TH BIRTHDAY, WAS DEFMIN HOFFMANN, FOLLOWED BY MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY ERICH MIELKE AND MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR FRIEDRICH DICKEL, WHO RECEIVED THE AWARD ON DECEMBER 1. FINALLY, A NEW LAW ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS IN NOVEMBER 1975, DECLARED THAT THE NVA WOULD IN THE FUTURE TAKE PRECEDENCE IN RECEIVING SUPPORT FROM THE GDR ECONOMY AND INSTITUTED A SYSTEM OF MONETARY PENALTIES TO BE LEVIED ON FACTORIES THAT WERE LAX IN MEETING THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO THE NVA.

13. THE GDR'S CURRENT SECURITY CAMPAIGN, LIKE ITS RECENT TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION, IS PROBABLY INTENDED BY THE PARTY LEADERSHIP FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION AS A STRONG ANTIDOTE TO THE POTENTIALLY DESTABILIZING EFFECTS OF INCREASED CONTACTS WITH THE WEST. IT FURTHER SERVES TO DAMPEN POPULAR HOPES FOR A LOOSENING OF CONTROLS IN GDR SOCIETY AFTER HELSINKI BY STRESSING THE NEED FOR DISCIPLINE AND MILITARY PREPAREDNESS. THE CAMPAIGN COULD ALSO FORESHADOW A LARGER ROLE FOR THE NVA WITHIN THE GDR. IN ANY EVENT, IT IS DESIGNED TO MEET SPECIFIC GDR DOMESTIC CONCERNS RELATED TO INTERNAL SECURITY AND CONTROL. COOPER

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